

**Meeting Date:** May 18, 2023

**Agenda Item No. 2**

**Agenda Item:** 2023 LAP Big Game Hunt Modification    **Bureau Chief Approval:** JR  
Proposals (**Action**)

**Prepared by:** Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager

**Background:**

Although the Department focusses efforts for the season-setting process on a biennial cycle, the Commission has the authority to consider proposals and adjust annually if necessary due to fire, severe winter weather, disease, new data, or other factors. Information gathered on deer and pronghorn populations of the Southeast and Upper Snake Regions indicates above-average mortality rates in some populations subjected to severe snow and cold conditions this winter.

On May 11, 2023, the Commission adopted changes to seven deer and pronghorn hunts for the 2023 season based on winter severity.

The following deer hunts were converted to antlered only for the 2023 hunting season:

- Controlled Hunt No. 1099 (Controlled Hunt Area 73A, 20 tags, either sex)
- Controlled Hunt No. 1100 (Controlled Hunt Area 74, 20 tags, either sex)

The following deer hunt was closed for the 2023 hunting season:

- Controlled Hunt No. 1064 (Controlled Hunt Area 60-1, 100 tags, antlerless only)

The following pronghorn hunts were closed for the 2023 hunting season:

- Controlled Hunt No. 4022 (Controlled Hunt Area 60A-1, 15 tags, either sex)
- Controlled Hunt No. 4025 (Controlled Hunt Area 76-1, 5 tags, either sex)
- Controlled Hunt No. 4043 (Controlled Hunt Area 60A-1, 40 tags, either sex)
- Controlled Hunt No. 4052 (Controlled Hunt Area 61-1, 25 tags, either sex)

Each controlled hunt above has an accompanying Landowner Appreciation Program (LAP) hunt. LAP tags are awarded through a lottery system to registered landowners. Staff is proposing the seven LAP hunts tied to the parent hunts above be modified or closed for the 2023 hunting season to align with changes to the parent hunts.

Staff recommend the following deer hunts be converted to antlered only for the 2023 hunting season:

- **LAP Controlled Hunt No. 1378 (Controlled Hunt Area 73A, 2 tags, either sex)**
- **LAP Controlled Hunt No. 1379 (Controlled Hunt Area 74, 2 tags, either sex)**

Staff recommend the following deer hunt be closed for the 2023 hunting season:

- **LAP Controlled Hunt No. 1351 (Controlled Hunt Area 60-1, 10 tags, antlerless only)**

Staff recommend the following pronghorn hunts be closed for the 2023 hunting season:

- **LAP Controlled Hunt No. 4321, (Controlled Hunt Area 60A-1, 2 tags, either sex)**
- **LAP Controlled Hunt No. 4324 (Controlled Hunt Area 76-1, 1 tag, either sex)**
- **LAP Controlled Hunt No. 4332 (Controlled Hunt Area 60A-1, 4 tags, either sex)**
- **LAP Controlled Hunt No. 4341 (Controlled Hunt Area 61-1, 3 tags, either sex)**

**Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:**

Idaho Code 36-104 grants the Commission authority to promulgate rules for the taking of wildlife consistent with state policy. Species management plans developed by the Department and adopted by the Commission provide long-term direction for population and harvest management.

**Public Involvement Process:**

Recommendations for the 2023 seasons that were set in March resulted from year-round public involvement, and population and harvest monitoring. Proposals being considered for tag number modifications during the 2023 season were posted via gold sheet prior to the Commission meeting on the Department's website to inform the public and provide an opportunity to provide input.

**Justification:**

Commission action is required to adopt changes to the 2023 hunting seasons that were set by proclamation by the Commission in March 2023.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends changing deer LAP controlled hunts 1378 and 1379 to antlered only for the 2023 hunting season, closing deer LAP controlled hunt 1351 for the 2023 hunting season, and closing pronghorn LAP controlled hunts 4321, 4324, 4332, and 4341 for the 2023 season.

**Action Requested:**

Approve adjustments to the 2023 big game hunting season.

Suggested Motion: Commission adopt modifications to the 2023 big game hunting seasons as recommended by staff.